

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

*The pending claims are (no claim changes have been made herein):*

1. (Previously presented) A method of making a window unit, the method comprising:

providing a coating on a glass substrate, the coating including at least one layer comprising Ag, and an uppermost layer of the coating comprises silicon nitride;

ion beam depositing, using gas comprising a hydrocarbon, a protective layer comprising diamond-like carbon (DLC) on the glass substrate over the coating so as to directly contact the coating so that the protective layer comprising DLC directly contacts the uppermost layer of the coating that comprises silicon nitride;

heat treating the glass substrate with the coating and protective layer thereon so that the protective layer comprising diamond-like carbon (DLC) at least partially burns off during the heat treating thereby exposing the uppermost layer of the coating that comprises silicon nitride; and

following said heat treating, coupling the glass substrate with the coating thereon to another substrate in order to form the window unit.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the window unit is an insulating glass (IG) window unit.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said coupling comprises laminating the glass substrate to the another substrate via a polymer inclusive interlayer in order to form a vehicle windshield.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said heat treating comprises heating the glass substrate to a temperature of at least about 570<sup>0</sup> C.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said heat treating comprises heating the glass substrate to a temperature of from about 590<sup>0</sup> C to 788<sup>0</sup>C for at least one minute in thermally tempering and/or heat bending the glass substrate.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the protective layer comprising DLC entirely burns off during the heat treatment.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the protective layer comprising DLC has an average hardness of at least about 10 GPa.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the protective layer comprising DLC has an average hardness of at least about 20 GPa.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the protective layer comprising DLC includes more  $sp^3$  carbon-carbon bonds than  $sp^2$  carbon-carbon bonds.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the coating comprises a second layer comprising Ag, and wherein the two layers comprising Ag in the coating are spaced from one another with at least one dielectric layer provided therebetween.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the dielectric layer comprises at least one of tin oxide and silicon nitride.

13. (Previously presented) A method of making a window unit, the method comprising:

providing a solar control coating on a glass substrate, wherein the solar control coating comprises at least one IR reflecting layer comprising Ag and an uppermost layer of the solar control coating comprises silicon nitride;

ion beam depositing a protective layer comprising diamond-like carbon (DLC) on the glass substrate directly over and contacting the coating so that the protective layer comprising DLC directly contacts the uppermost layer of the coating that comprises silicon nitride, wherein an ion source having hydrocarbon gas therein is used in said ion beam depositing of the protective layer comprising DLC;

heat treating the substrate with the coating and protective layer thereon at a temperature of at least 570 degrees C so that the protective layer comprising diamond-like carbon (DLC) at least partially burns off; and

following said heat treating, coupling the glass substrate with the coating thereon to another substrate in order to form the window unit.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the window unit comprises at least one of an IG window unit and a vehicle windshield.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the solar control coating comprises at least one layer comprising Ag, and at least first and second dielectric layers on opposites sides of the layer comprising Ag.

16. (Canceled)

17. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said heat treating causes the protective layer comprising diamond-like carbon (DLC) to only partially burn off during the heat treating.

18. (New) A method of making a window unit, the method comprising:

sputtering a multi-layer solar control coating on a glass substrate, wherein the solar control coating comprises at least one IR reflecting layer comprising silver sandwiched between at least first and second dielectric layers, and wherein the second dielectric layer is an uppermost layer of the solar control coating and comprises silicon nitride;

ion beam depositing a protective layer comprising hydrogenated diamond-like carbon (DLC) on the glass substrate directly over and contacting the coating so that the protective layer comprising hydrogenated DLC directly contacts the uppermost layer of the solar control coating that comprises silicon nitride, wherein an ion source having hydrocarbon gas therein is used in said ion beam depositing of the protective layer comprising hydrogenated DLC;

heat treating the substrate with the coating and protective layer thereon at a temperature of at least 570 degrees C sufficient for tempering and/or bending the glass substrate and so that the protective layer comprising diamond-like carbon (DLC) only partially burns off; and

following said heat treating, coupling the glass substrate with the coating thereon to another substrate in order to form the window unit.